



TOURISM CAPITAL GRANT PROGRAM QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

November 10, 2021

Program Summary

The purpose of the Tourism Capital Grant Program is to provide funding to assist local governments and tourism-entity nonprofits working to restore economic activity in Wisconsin following the COVID-19 pandemic. The State intends to award up to \$10 million in grants through this Announcement. Funding for this assistance is provided to Wisconsin by the federal American Rescue Plan Act of 2021. The program is administered by the Department of Administration (DOA). Additional details are available on the [Program website](#).

Prior to contacting DOA please consult the Grant Announcement, Grant Application and this Question and Answer document available on the [Program Website](#).

U.S. Department of the Treasury American Rescue Plan Act guidance can be found [here](#).

FOR ALL QUESTIONS RELATED TO ALLOWABLE EXPENSES

DOA will execute grant agreements with successful applicants only after DOA determines that the proposed project and associated expenses included in an application are reasonably consistent with guidance from the US Department of Treasury for use of State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds under the American Rescue Plan Act, and Program provisions. DOA's execution of grant agreements, however, is not dispositive as to whether any particular cost meets the criteria. Applicants retain responsibility for demonstrating eligibility of expenses to DOA and are required to hold DOA harmless for any audit disallowance related to the eligibility of costs, including repayment of ineligible amounts.

FOR ALL QUESTIONS RELATED TO APPLICANT ELIGIBILITY

DOA will not respond to inquiries regarding an applicant's specific eligibility. Each applicant is required to determine its eligibility based on program requirements provided in the Grant Announcement. However, DOA will accept and answer questions seeking clarification of eligibility requirements. DOA will determine applicant eligibility only as a routine matter during the application review process after the application deadline has passed. Applicants should carefully review Section 4: Eligibility Requirements of the Grant Announcement prior to applying.

1. We are very excited about this grant opportunity however are questioning the eligibility of our organization. We are established under Wis Chapter 237.

Response: This organization is not an eligible applicant.

2. In the case of a 501(c)(3) operating in a facility leased (over 40 years) from the municipality, does the non-profit apply or the City?

Response: Either entity would be eligible to apply if other requirements are met. Note that if the applicant is not the owner of the facility at which the project will be implemented, the applicant will need to demonstrate the authority to carry out the project.

3. My question during the webinar was "If your organization was formed prior to January 2019; but did not have a 501c3 status until April of 2019, are they still eligible to apply?"

Our organization began meeting and starting the formation process (posted meetings, etc.) in 2017 and 2018; we submitted for our 501c3 and received our determination on April 24, 2019. Are we eligible to apply since we were organized prior to January 1, 2019; or does it go by date of 501c3 status, which in our case is April 24, 2019?

Response: The program requires that an applicant be in operation as of January 1, 2019. The program verifies eligibility based on DFI status.

4. I am writing on behalf of an entity. I read that non-profits may apply and then see that it has to be a governing body? We are a Memorial Park looking to expand the facilities because we know that we need to consolidate buildings and anticipate the visitor numbers we had pre-Covid. Will we qualify to submit an application?

Response: Eligible applicants can be non-profit organizations with 501(c)3 or 501(c)6 status, a Wisconsin Tribal Government or a Wisconsin Local unit of Government.

5. I am inquiring on behalf of supportive housing 501c3 Non-Profit that has recently purchased a building to renovate as a shelter. We are wondering if we would qualify for this grant?

Response: No, this grant program is for projects with a tourism impact.

6. We have reviewed the Tourism Capital Grant Program and federal ARPA guidance and it is unclear whether acquisition of park lands is an eligible cost. In this context, it would be related to acquiring additional park lands for public use as existing nearby park lands have seen extremely high usage rates due to COVID impacts.

Response: Yes, it is a potentially eligible project.

7. I'm reaching out to you on behalf of a County Fair sponsored by the County's Agricultural Society. Our project proposal includes several improvements to the Walworth County Fair grounds, including:

- Construction of a new Equestrian area

- Construction of a new barn pavilion
- Construction of a new multi-purpose facility which can accommodate live performances, concerts, and special events

We wanted to verify that these activities would be eligible for funding within the grant.

Response: Assuming the applicant is eligible, these activities would be eligible for grant funding.

8. The Society is the fundraising partner for a zoo and adventure park. While the Society did not lose funds during COVID, the Zoo certainly did. The Society is planning a new feature to add to the Zoo this Spring in an effort to bring people back to visit the Zoo in the numbers we say pre-COVID. We'd like to apply for grants to help with this new project. Would this be eligible?

Response: The question does not provide sufficient information to provide a response. Sections 4 and 7 of the Grant Announcement outline eligible applicants and expenses.

9. Are items such as outdoor lighting and seating eligible expenses?

Response: Yes, they could be part of an otherwise eligible project.

10. We have a lease agreement with the Department of Transportation to staff a Wisconsin Welcome Center. Would we be eligible to apply to get this center remodeled?

Response: There is insufficient information here to understand whether your lease would allow you to carry out a project of this nature. Note that if the applicant is not the owner of the facility at which the project will be implemented, the applicant will need to demonstrate the authority to carry out the project.

11. Can capital improvements include renovations to existing facilities?

Response: Yes, they are potentially eligible.

12. Are staff salaries and wages for construction management eligible as part of the capital project budget?

Response: Yes, they are a potentially eligible expense.

13. Would a larger beautification infrastructure project that would include digital tourism signage, landscaping installation and public art in a defined geographic area be considered (assuming landscape and other general maintenance would be covered outside of the grant)?

Response: Yes, it is a potentially eligible project.

14. Can a local unit of government use a Tourism Capital grant to install public infrastructure on private, for-profit property? A resort is interested in doubling its conference space and has requested municipal assistance expanding water/sewer at the site, out of the public right-of-way.

Response: Infrastructure improvements for a private entity would not be an eligible project.

15. Can funding be used to purchase handicapped lifts for the facility? Can they be portable rather than stationary?

Response: Yes, they are potentially eligible.

16. We plan to request funding for completion of our Phase III Visitor Center building. If we receive a grant amount that is less than what is needed to complete the building, are we allowed to use the funds on another capital project? If so, how would we detail those project costs.

Response: No, the funds awarded are intended for the project that is submitted, the applicant should clearly define all of the uses for the funding requested.

17. Can capital expenses for this project already incurred since last March be included for reimbursement?

Response: The earliest date for funding eligible project expenses would be March 3, 2021.

18. If capital projects were completed recently, can they be included?

Response: The earliest date for funding eligible project expenses would be March 3, 2021.

19. If a nonprofit operates tourism facilities in Wisconsin, administrative offices for the Wisconsin division, has a DFI registration, but has its main offices in Minnesota, can it apply for funding to improve the Wisconsin facilities?

Response: Section 4 of the grant announcement requires that the applicant conduct operations in Wisconsin and have an administrative presence in Wisconsin, so if the applicant meets the other eligibility requirements, then the answer would be yes.

20. The City is thinking of using its ARPA funding to update the campground, but is looking for funding opportunities for the new boat launch. The current boat launch is over 30 yrs old and is in dire need of repair or retirement. I wonder if this opportunity would be a potential funding source for the grant opportunity.

Response: This is a potentially eligible project.

21. If a facility is used for both local community use, but also hosts regional tournaments that generate tourism/hotel stays, is that okay or does the facility need to be exclusively for regional tournament/use?

Response: Yes, it is a potentially eligible project.

22. Is outfitting an existing building with equipment and supplies, such as signage, conference & education furniture, parking lot, other amenities for visitors eligible?

Response: Furniture and fixtures could be included as part of an otherwise eligible project.

23. Regarding the capital grant, would a mobile kiosk qualify? The terms “shovel ready” and “construction” in the application raised flags.

Response: It could be a potentially eligible project expense.

24. What date is the “Grant Announcement closing date”? Is it the grant application deadline date – November 12th?

Response: The Grant Announcement closing date is grant application deadline date – November 19th.

25. Can you please clarify the information required in the "DFI Entity ID" box of the application? I will be submitting on behalf of a Non-profit organization.

Response: An organization’s DFI (Department of Financial Institutions) Entity ID is available to search at the following link: <https://www.wdfi.org/apps/CorpSearch/Search.aspx>. Per Section 4.1.2 of the Program Grant Announcement, Applicants, If required, must be registered with the Wisconsin Department of Financial Institutions and have one of the following statuses as of the Grant Announcement closing date: “restored to good standing”, “incorporated/qualified/registered”, “organized”, or “registered”.

26. Are you looking for one or two projects to invest in statewide or are you planning to fund multiple projects?

Response: We are planning to fund multiple projects.

27. Since local governments are able to apply for Tourism Capital Grant Funds as well, would you suggest to the entities apply separately or would you suggest a joint application when it’s a common interest if the project total were not to exceed the maximum potential award?

Response: The program would not fund requests from multiple entities for the same project, submitting a collaborative application for projects benefiting multiple eligible entities would be preferred.

28. Are we able to apply for a Tourism Capital Grant if we've already applied for a different grant included in the Badger Bounce Back Program?

Response: Yes, however this program will NOT fund projects or activities which have already received an award from another state-funded ARPA program.

29. Can you confirm that other ARPA funding (for other initiatives/projects) do not impact consideration of this award from the same organizational entity?

Response: Yes, however this program will NOT fund projects or activities which have already received an award from another state-funded ARPA program.

30. What happens if a project is not complete by 12/31/2024?

Response: Eligible projects should plan to be completed before 12/31/24.

31. We have been told this program is really for projects in Milwaukee and Madison. Is that true?

Response: No.

32. Can an organization submit multiple applications?

Response: No.

33. Could we apply for two distinct projects in one application?

Response: Yes, please be as clear as possible in the application.

34. Can a city and a county submit two separate applications?

Response: Yes, a city and county could submit separate applications for the same project, the program would only fund unique expenses.

35. Is there an anticipated number of awards?

Response: No, the number of awards will be determined by the amount of eligible project applications we receive.

36. If we applied for the following 2 grants:

- WI Tourism Capital Grant Program (Deadline: Nov 12, 2021. Max award amount \$3.5M)
- National Grant: American Rescue Plan American Rescue Plan Act Travel, Tourism, and Outdoor Recreation EDA grant (Min Award: \$100,000, Max Award: \$10,000,000. Total pool \$240,000,000)?

Questions:

1. Since these are utilizing the same National funds, we can only be awarded one of them, correct?

Response: While both received funding from the American Rescue Plan Act, the State program is not the same as the federal program, an award in the federal program would not necessarily impact the State program, however the program would not fund activities or expenses funded by another program. Applicants should ensure that their proposals for the project(s) of interest meet both state and federal requirements.

2. It looks like your team (WI DOA) will be announcing recipients first, so if we applied for both and was selected as a recipient with your organization, would we have to withdraw our national request?

Response: Please see the response to the first question submitted.

37. Can an organization's application include multiple projects at different geographic locations?

Response: Yes it could, the applicant will want to be clear about the connection between projects in multiple locations.

38. Do you know when the award decision will be made by?

Response: The award decisions will likely be made in early 2022.

39. As a not-for-profit organization, are we required to go through the bidding process for our project or can we get quotes – can we hire anyone we want to do our project?

Response: 501(c)(3) applicants are not required under ARPA requirements to follow any particular construction vendor selection process.

40. Are we required to use the Davis Bacon rates on our project? Do we have any special requirement (State or Federal) to follow in order to get our project accomplished?

Response: ARPA does not require compliance with Davis Bacon but does not exempt applicants from otherwise applicable federal, state or local laws governing procurement or construction contracting. Applicants are encouraged to consult with legal counsel to determine whether any such federal, state or local laws apply.

41. Is there a minimum project amount?

Response: No, there is no minimum award amount.

42. Is there a maximum project budget?

Response: The maximum award amount is \$3.5 million.

43. Is the Grant award available for 100% of the project cost?

Response: Yes, if it is under \$3.5 million.

44. Will applications be considered for partial award or is it all or nothing?

Response: It is possible depending on the number of qualified applications that the program would make less than full awards to qualified applicants.

45. At any time, do we have to specify a dollar amount that we are requesting?

Response: Yes, please specify the dollar amount that you are requesting in the budget section of the application.

46. What level of detail are you looking for in the budget? Should the budget include estimates from contractors?

Response: Please provide as much detail as possible in the budget, if estimates are available the program would recommend using them in your budget materials.

47. If our project cost is \$35 Million, for the budget section of the application do you just want us to line item out a max of \$3.5M of costs, or the whole budget?

Response: Please reference the total project costs required for your project and the other possible sources of funding. In the submitted budget for the project, the applicant should reference the total project cost, and how grant funds would be used.

48. If my project has two phases, should I apply for the total costs or somehow indicate the costs to complete each individual phase? For example, the funding may become a greater priority for the first phase rather than the second phase or vice versa.

Response: Applicants should clarify the total project cost and how grant funds would be used.

49. Is it likely that requests may be funded in part? If so, how important is it to divide the project into possible phases in the budget section?

Response: Please see the response to question 44.

50. If less than the requested amount is awarded, to what extent, if any, can the project be modified to use the funds?

Response: Selected grant applicants would have the opportunity to discuss project modifications at the time of awards.

51. On larger projects, would funds be distributed once the project is completely finished as a reimbursement, or is their potential for payouts to awardees to be broken up into multiple payouts (given the fact that some orgs won't be able to front the total project expenses, but may be able to front portions of the project in phases if funds are distributed after each phase is complete)?

Response: This is not a reimbursement program. Depending on the size of the successfully awarded projects, payments to grantees may vary in their disbursement.

52. How does the timing of funding work? For example, do they have to spend money on the project and be reimbursed? Or do they receive funding upfront and need to provide receipts/documentation after or during the project?

Response: This is not a reimbursement program. Depending on the size of the successfully awarded projects, payments to grantees may vary in their disbursement.

53. We will not need to front costs for our project, correct? Grant funds, if awarded, would be available, correct?

Response: Please see the response to question 52.

54. Will volunteer hours and contributions be scored as a positive component of expense reduction?

Response: Matching funds are not required for this grant. Applicants should address in-kind contributions such as volunteer hours in their application.

55. What is the anticipated award amount per request?

Response: The number of qualified applications is one factor in determining awarded amounts.

56. Our building project for a Research Center is scheduled for the spring of 2022 with completion by fall of 2022 or 2023 depending on acquiring all funds needed. The majority of our funds have come from private donations. Are we able to write this grant only for the remaining funds needed to complete the project? If that is allowable, would we submit an itemized budget only for that portion needed or should the itemized budget be for the entire building with an explanation of what funds we have acquired and what is still needed?

Response: Provide the full budget, the amount of funding being requested by the program, and how it would be used.

57. Please explain the difference between "encumbered" and "obligated" as it relates to spending funds.

Response: In either case, the funds have been committed for specific purposes but not yet spent.

58. What is the definition of "Shovel-ready" for the purposes of this grant?

Response: A project that is or could be ready to begin construction in calendar year 2022.

59. Is there a distinction between "renovation" and "restoration" for the purposes of this grant?

Response: No, both will be eligible.

60. Are there any match requirements?

Response: No.

61. Is there any benefit to identify matching funds even though they are not required?

Response: No.

62. Will local match funds be considered/scored?

Response: No.

63. Would in-kind contributions be accepted?

Response: Match is not required for the program.

64. I am wondering if there is a place to include additional attachments (e.g., maps, photos) as a part of our application package?

Response: No, no additional attachments should be submitted.

65. Does a floor plan for the project need to be submitted?

Response: No.

66. I was told that municipalities do not have DFI Entity #. Is that correct and how do we bypass this on the application if it is marked as a required field?

Response: Municipalities do not have a DFI Entity #. Please put "N/A" in the DFI Entity ID # field in the application if applicant is a municipality.

67. Does a municipality need to submit a W-9?

Response: No.

68. Do you require attachments of actual contractor estimates?

Response: No.

69. Is there a requirement for blueprints or technical drawing of project?

Response: No.

70. When would the DOA-3027 be needed?

Response: Applicants should submit the DOA-3027 form if their application materials contain proprietary and confidential information which qualifies as a trade secret, as provided in s. 19.36(5) Wis. Stats., or is otherwise material that can be kept confidential under the Wisconsin Open Records Law.

Trade Secret is defined in s. 134.90(1)(c), Wis. Stats. as follows: "Trade secret" means information, including a formula, pattern, compilation, program, device, method, technique or process to which all of the following apply:

1. The information derives independent economic value, actual or potential, from not being generally known to, and not being readily ascertainable by proper means by, other persons who can obtain economic value from its disclosure or use.
2. The information is the subject of efforts to maintain its secrecy that are reasonable under the circumstances.

71. Our fundraising is managed by a Community Foundation of which we are a component fund - which W9 do we include? The W9 for the Community Fund?

Response: The applicant should submit their own Form W-9.

72. Do you require multiple bids from outside contractors? If yes, how many? Do you need us to chart volunteer hours/labor? Is there a format? Do you need retail receipts for all building materials or is there a materiality threshold?

Response: ARPA guidelines do not include any particular vendor selection process; however, applicants (e.g., local governments) may have particular procurement requirements that they must follow. See also the response to questions 39 and 40.

73. I attended the webinar yesterday for the Tourism Capital Grant Program. We preliminarily printed off the DOA form 3027. Is this the correct form? "Designation of Confidential and Proprietary Information?"

Response: Please refer to Question #70 for when the DOA-3027 form is needed. The application form can be found on the [Program website](#) under application instructions and document links.

74. Where/what are the scoring criteria?

Response: The scoring criteria can be found in the application form or in the convenience copy of the application, which is located on the [Program website](#) on page 1 of the application instructions. The criteria can also be found in Section 3.3 or 6.0 of the of the Grant Announcement.

75. Once the forms are uploaded will there be an indication that the forms have been uploaded successfully?

Response: If you would like to receive a completed copy of the application, please type in your name and email in the field "Re-enter applicant name and email here to receive a completed copy" when beginning to fill out the application.

76. Can you direct me to where on your website that I can find a budget template?

Response: The budget template can be found in the application form, which is available on the [Program website](#) on page 1 of the application instructions.

77. How do you "sign" the application in the Docusign program? Do they just enter the person's name or do they need a digital signature?

Response: Per the [Application Instructions](#), applicants will adopt a signature through the DocuSign portal. Please see the link below for more detailed instructions.
<https://support.docusign.com/en/guides/signer-guide-signing-adopt-new>

78. Would there be a pdf of the application questions I can send to others that are assisting with completing the application? I will then take their inputs and add them to our application forms.

Response: A convenience copy of the application questions can be found on the [Program website](#) on page 1 of the application instructions.

79. Are there character limits in the budget description column?

Response: There are space constraints, but not character limits, please ensure that the responses are legible.

80. Do narrative response character limits include spaces, or exclude spaces?

Response: The narrative response character limit does include spaces.

81. Can we include any request for technical assistance for this grant?

Response: There is insufficient information about what type of “technical assistance” you are seeking to provide a response. Note that costs you incur in preparing a grant application are ineligible.

82. Would a state government owned tourism project be eligible if it is paid for by a private party with the applicant being a local NGO (501c3)?

Response: The question does not provide sufficient information to provide a response.

83. Is there a recommended percentage of construction costs that we should be requesting, or would it be reasonable to request the full amount of construction costs, which would be around \$2 million? We want to request the right amount that will make us most competitive for this grant.

We are also considering requesting funds for public infrastructure required for the expansion of a local resort, which would be needed to support overnight stays for families coming into town for the tournaments. Would this supporting project partner strengthen our application or weaken it?

Response: We are unable to comment on a specific strategy for your application.